

REMARKS

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 54-56, 59-63, 65, 66, 73-81, 84 and 86-89 is acknowledged and appreciated.

Claims 67-69 have been canceled in response to the objection to these claims.

Claims 46-50, 53, 57, 58, 64, 67 and 70 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin (IBMTDB) entitled Plasma Treatment to Improve Resist Adhesion. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The principle on which the process disclosed in the IBMTDB reference is based on the withdrawal by plasma treatment of part of the surface of the polytetrafluoroethylene substrate, so as to leave the silica particles exposed (see page 322, point 1). Withdrawal of silica particles by treatment with caustic soda is also disclosed in the reference. The plasma treatment is known to act uniformly on the whole surface, and having protuberances and recesses is not relevant for the process and does not provide a variation of the composition or pattern on the surface. In addition, the caustic soda only removes the silica particles from the surface without smoothing the surface so that the silica particles emerge in regions of the surface corresponding to the protrusions. Thus, the treatments disclosed in the IBMTDB reference does not provide a smooth surface with special variation of the composition of the treated surface as in the claimed process.

In the claimed invention, the smoothing of the surface is made so as to obtain a compositional pattern on the surface of the mixture. Both the solvent and the heat treatment

act on the substrate and cause smoothing of the surface and redistribution of the material on the substrate, without removing anything.

Moreover, the claimed process produces a compositional pattern while the IBMTDB process gives a homogeneous film without any control on the special chemical composition of the end product. For all these reasons, claim 46 and its dependent claims are believed to be allowable over IBMTDB. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 46, 48-52, 64, 67, 71, 72, 82, 93 and 85 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukunaga et al. (US 2002/0160103). Claim 46 has been amended to incorporate the features recited in claim 47, which is not subject to the rejection based on Fukunaga et al. Accordingly, claim 46 and its dependent claims are allowable over Fukunaga et al.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. The Examiner should contact Applicants' undersigned attorney if a telephone conference would expedite prosecution.

If a Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response is required to make the attached response timely, it is hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response in the above-identified application for the period required to make the attached response timely. The Commissioner is hereby

authorized to charge fees which may be required to this application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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July 30, 2009

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